(SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Fertiliser is made available to the farmers as per assessment done before each Kharif and Rabi seasons by the Government in consultation with the State Governments and fertilizers manufactures/importers. Balanced and judicious application of fertilizers and pesticides help in increasing agriculture production and controlling pest population from damaging crops. No estimates of loss in production on account of lesser application of fertilizers and pesticides are available.

(c) There is a widespread network of dealers/primary agricultural cooperative societies numbering about 2.89 lakh in the country to make fertilizers available to the farmers (including small/marginal farmers) across the country in required quantities at maximum retail prices which are significantly lower than the cost of production of fertilizer. Measures for plant protection under taken by the Government include monitoring of pest/disease situation in all States, production, conservation and release of bio- control agents, training farmers and extension officers of the State Agriculture Department in Integrated Pest Management through Farmers Field Schools (FFSs), providing subsides @25% upto Rs.500/ hectare and Rs.250/ hectare for application of bio-pesticides and chemical pesticides to small and marginal farmers.

Change in guidlines for relief to drought Hit States

†2269. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased the state:

(a) whether Central Government have made changes in the existing guidlines to provide relief to drought hit States in order to give them lump-sum waiving for one year on payment of interest on loan for Kharif crops, to increase the ceiling of agriculture investment subsidy and to provide additional assistance to these States;

(b) if so, the completed details of new guidelines issue by Centre; and

(c) the extensive details of released/proposed to be released assistance schemes and loan schemes by Central Government for drought hit States especially, for the farmers of Rajasthan, till date?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) According to the Ministry of Home Affairs who are the nodal Ministry for overseeing the operation of relief funds for natural calamities including drought *i.e.* Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), the items and norms of assistance from CRF/NCCF are generally revised after the Award of every Finance Commission. Subsequent to the Award of the Twelfth Finance Commission (TFC) for the period 2005-2010, the Ministry of Home Affairs constituted an Expert Group, comprising of representatives from concerned Central Ministries/Departments and some State Governments, to review and revise the extant items and norms of assistance from CRF/NCCF. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Expert Group has since submitted its report to the Government and the Government is examining the recommendations of the Expert Group. Further the Government of India has announced a comprehensive credit policy on 18th June, 2004. The policy, *inter-alia,* envisages debt restructuring in respect of farmers in distress and farmers in arrears providing for rescheduling of outstanding loans over a period of five years including moratorium of two years. Further, for six identified districts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra namely, Akola, Amravati, Buldhana, Wardha, Wasim and Yavatmal, reporting high incidence of suicide by farmer, the Government has decided to waive the entire overdue interest as on 30th June, 2006. This burden will be shared equally by the Central Government and State Government.

(c) During the year 2005-06 (August, 2005 onwards), three States, namely Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Uttaranchal reported drought situation of varying magnitude. State-wise details of assistance approved by the High Level Committee (HLC) for drought relief in indicated below:

SI.No.	State	Assistance from NCCF (Rs. in crores*)	Foodgrains (in lakh MT)
1.	Jharkhand	107.37	0.20
2.	Rajasthan	146.50	2.00
3.	Uttaranchal	38.99	0.10

NCCF- National Calamity Contingency Fund.

* Subject to adjustment of balances in Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) of the State.

Himachal Pradesh recently reported that drought situation was experienced during Rabi 2005-06 due to long dry spell and submitted a Memorandum seeking assistance from NCCF. An Inter Ministerial Central Team has recently visited the State far assessment of the situation and requirements of Central assistance.

For Rajasthan, provision of cash assistance in lieu of allocation of wheat, for payment of wages for labourers employed on drought relief works during May and June, 2006 is under consideration.

Average land of farmers

†2270. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 80 per cent farmers are such in the country who are having 1.41 hectare average land;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these families are earning their livelihood by cultivating the said land;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government; and

(e) the assessment with regard to maximum and minimum annual income earned by cultivating the said land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) As per Agriculture Census 1995-96, the percentage of operational holdings having 1.42 hectare of average land is 80.31.

(b) to (d) The families operating such holdings earn their livelihood by cultivating their land and also by undertaking allied activities like dairying, poultry rearing, wage earning, non-farm business; etc.

(e) The annual income of the farmer households from cultivation was in the range from Rs. 4032.00 in the State of Orissa to Rs. 33864.00 in the State of Punjab during 2002-03.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.